

in any of the larval conditions of the Crustacea of Cornwall, though the number I have examined is great.

“Even the alternations of generations will not serve in this matter; for if I understand aright, you have examined the young and find them like the adult, while I have examined the great majority of our Decapods without once detecting the strange forms of these genera among them.

“Agassiz’ assertion must be taken with limitation, or he has been altogether deceived, so far as British observations would indicate.

“I have carefully examined the Zoë condition of *H. varians*, *Prideauxiana*, and *Cranchii*, and find they are all totally unlike *Cuma* and the kindred genera. We must not generalize too quickly. Agassiz’ specimens, it must be remembered, were American; still I should not expect that kindred species would differ so widely as they must, if his observations are correct.”

#### RARE BRITISH BIRDS.

To the Editors of the *Annals of Natural History*.

Falmouth, December 13, 1856.

GENTLEMEN,—On Thursday last, a specimen of the *Thalassidroma Leachii*, Selby, in an exhausted state, was captured by a shipwright near the bar. It is in the possession of Mr. Chapman, taxidermist. Two specimens of the *Lutra vulgaris*, Desm., were shot by Mr. Wm. Holder, at the Swanpool, on Wednesday night last. One measured 4 feet long, and weighed 21 pounds; the other 3½ feet long, and 16 pounds.

I am, Gentlemen, yours truly,

W. P. COCKS.

*Note on Zootoca vivipara v. nigra, Gray, Cat. Rept. B. M. 28.*

Mr. Thomas Hopley has lately presented to the British Museum a black specimen of *Zootoca vivipara*, which was caught by a young friend, Mr. Fritz Noel Mackay, near Eastbourn, Sussex.

Mr. Hopley states that the variety is permanent in that neighbourhood, but nowhere common.

The Black Lizard has only hitherto been recorded in our fauna as found in Ireland. It is not uncommon in some districts in Germany, but appears local.

It is regarded as a distinct species by Wolf, and well figured under the name of *Lacerta nigra* in Sturm’s beautiful ‘Fauna Germanica.’

—J. E. GRAY.

*On a new Turkey, Meleagris mexicana.*

By J. GOULD, Esq., F.R.S. &c.

In the lapse of time the origin of several of the animals which man has subjected to his dominion, and which are of the greatest service

to his necessities or his pleasures, has become involved in obscurity. As instances in point we may cite among quadrupeds the Camel, the Horse, the Dog, &c., and among birds the various *Gallinaceæ*, *Anatidæ* and *Columbidæ*, all of which were derived from Asia. The productions of the New World have not yielded such ready obedience to his sway, since no one of its quadrupeds has yet been domesticated, and only one of its birds—the Turkey; but a like fate, if I mistake not, has attended the origin of this solitary acquisition, which, although the bird has not been known to us more than 300 years, is equally wrapped in uncertainty.

“So involved in obscurity,” says Mr. Martin, “is the early history of the Turkey, and so ignorant do the writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries appear to have been about it, that they have regarded it as a bird known to the ancients by the name of ‘Meleagris,’ namely, the Guinea-fowl or Pintado, a mistake which was not cleared up until the middle of the eighteenth century. The appellation of Turkey which the bird bears in our country, arose, according to Willoughby, from a supposition that it came originally from the country so called. Mexico was first discovered by Grijalva in 1518. Oviedo speaks of the Turkey as a kind of peacock abounding in New Spain, which had already, in 1526, been transported in a domestic state to the islands and the Spanish Main, where it was kept by the Christian colonists. It is reported to have been introduced into England in 1524, and is enumerated as among the dainties of the table in 1541. In 1573 it had become the customary Christmas fare of the farmer.” Every author who has written on the subject since the days of Linnæus has considered it to be derived from the well-known wild Turkey of North America, but on account of the great differences which are met with among our domestic Turkeys, and the circumstance of the wild Turkeys recently imported from North America not readily associating or pairing with them, I have for some years past entertained a contrary opinion. This opinion may be met by some persons with the remark, that similar and even greater differences occur among our domestic poultry. True—but I believe that these differences are due to an admixture of two, three, or more species, and that in no case would the domestication of a single species produce characters so decided as those exhibited by the two birds now exhibited.

In Canada and the United States the Turkey is partially migratory, visiting those countries during the summer, for the purpose of breeding, and although some writers state that it is a native of Mexico, I can hardly think it likely that it ranges very far south in the latter country, for, from the southern boundary of Canada to Mexico is nearly 2000 miles, and it is unlikely, I think, that a bird of the cold regions of Canada should also be indigenous to the hotter country of Mexico, whence, and not from North America, the Turkey was originally introduced into Europe by the Spaniards early in the sixteenth century.

Believing this bird to be distinct from the North American species,

it becomes necessary that one of them should receive a new name, and a question then arises to which of the two should it be given. My opinion is, that it will be better to retain the term *Gallopavo* for the North American species, and to call the present one *mexicana*, after the country of which it is a native. Linnæus' *Meleagris Gallopavo* is founded upon the *Gallopavo sylvestris* of Brisson's 'Ornithologie,' vol. i. p. 162, and upon Ray's New England Wild Turkey, both of which names appertain to the North American species; consequently the term *mexicana* would be a fit appellation for the present bird. I may mention, that it is the only example of a Turkey I have ever seen from Mexico, and that it was brought to this country by the late Mr. Floresi, a gentleman whose energy as a collector was only equalled by the honourable career of a moderately long life, during which he was connected with the Real del Monte mines in Mexico. Mr. Floresi travelled himself, and kept collectors, who penetrated into the remotest parts of that country; and many were the fine species he by this means communicated to the world of science. I may mention the splendid *Picus imperialis*, *Calurus neoænenus*, and many Humming Birds, as some of the species which but for his researches would have been unknown to us.

In size this new Turkey exceeds that of the largest specimens of the North American species; but it has shorter legs, a considerably larger and more broadly expanded tail, conspicuously zoned with brown and black, and terminated with white; the tail-coverts are very profusely developed, largely tipped with white, and bounded posteriorly with a narrow line of black, their basal portions being rich metallic bronze. The same arrangement of colouring also prevails on the feathers of the lower part of the flanks; and on the under tail-coverts, where it is particularly fine; the centre of the back is black, with green, purplish and red reflexions; the back of the neck, upper part of the back, and shoulders, are in some lights bronzy, in others the colour of fire; the greater wing-coverts are uniform bronzy brown, forming a conspicuous band across the wing; all the primaries are crossed by mottled bars of blackish brown and white, freckled with brown; all the under surface is fiery copper, intensely brilliant in certain lights, and becoming darker towards the flanks.

Total length 4 feet 4 inches; bill  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches; wing  $21\frac{3}{4}$  inches; tail 16 inches, and when spread about 24 inches across; tarsi  $6\frac{3}{4}$ .

In the Report of an expedition down the Zuni and Colorado Rivers by Captain L. Sitgreaves, lately published in America, the following passage occurs at p. 94, in reference to Wild Turkeys:—

“They are also found in New Mexico, in the neighbourhood of the copper-mines. I am told by our officers that those found there are of enormous size. Mr. Leroux, our guide, informed me that the Turkeys of the Gila River were different from those found east of the Rio Grande, and that they have much white about them.”

These are doubtless identical with the bird under consideration.

Since the above remarks were in type, I have been informed by J. H. Gurney, Esq., M.P., that he some years since received the skin of a Wild Turkey from the neighbourhood of the Real del

Monte mines in Mexico, which he considers to be the same as the bird above described; this specimen is now in the Museum at Norwich.—*Proc. Zool. Soc.*, April 8, 1856.

*Description of a new Trogon and a new Odontophorus.*

By JOHN GOULD, Esq., F.R.S., &c.

TROGON AURANTIIVENTRIS, Gould.

Male: Forehead, face and chin dull black; head, sides of the neck, breast, back and upper tail-coverts golden-green; wings slaty-black, the coverts and secondaries finely freckled, and the primaries margined at the base with white; two centre tail-feathers bronzy-green, narrowly tipped with black; the two next on each side bronzy-green on their outer webs, the inner webs and the tips black; three outer tail-feathers on each side black, crossed by numerous narrow bars of, and narrowly tipped with, white; under surface rich orange; separated from the green of the chest by a semilunar mark of white; thighs black; bill orange; feet dark grey.

Total length, 10 inches; bill,  $\frac{7}{8}$ ; wing,  $5\frac{3}{8}$ ; tail, 6.

Female: Head, all the upper surface and breast orange-brown; wing-coverts brown, minutely freckled with brownish-black; abdomen pale orange; two central tail-feathers reddish-brown, narrowly tipped with black; the two next on each side brown on their outer webs, the interior webs and tips black; three lateral feathers black at the base, their outer webs and apical portions white, minutely freckled with black, and a narrow irregular band of black near the tip.

*Hab.* near David, Veragua.

*Remark.*—This species is very closely allied to *Trogon puella*, being precisely similar in every character, except that of the colouring of the breast, which is orange instead of scarlet; both these species are remarkable for the regularity of the markings of their tail-feathers, and for the markings extending to the tip.

ODONTOPHORUS VERAGUENSIS, Gould.

Male: Crown of the head and crest dark rust-red; throat black, with a line of white down the centre of each feather; back reddish-brown, freckled with black, and a faint line of white down the centre of each feather; wings brown, mottled and freckled with black, and with a small indistinct spot of buff near the tip of each of the coverts; scapularies brown, with a light stripe down the centre, and with a large blotch of brownish-black near the apex of the inner web; rump pale brown, obscurely spotted with black; under surface light chocolate-brown, with a spot of white more or less encircled with black near the tip of each feather.

Female: Differs in having the forehead and upper feathers of the crest slaty-brown; and the spots on the breast smaller and less conspicuous.

Total length, 10 inches; bill,  $\frac{5}{8}$ ; wing,  $5\frac{3}{8}$ ; tail,  $2\frac{3}{4}$ ; tarsi,  $1\frac{5}{8}$ .

*Hab.* Veragua.